

Automated License Plate Recognition

| Applicable to: Members

Directive K.05

Revised 06/28/2016

Effective 03/2014

I. POLICY

This policy establishes procedures for using Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems to identify vehicles that have a specific interest to law enforcement.

II. DEFINITION

An ALPR system consists of cameras connected to a computer processing unit that converts images of license plates into computer-readable data. These cameras can be mounted to a patrol vehicle or set up in a stationary location. The license plate data is compared against a database of license plates associated with stolen vehicles and plates, wanted and missing persons, and other databases designed to enforce laws or further criminal investigations. The images and associated data, such as date, time and GPS coordinates, are then stored in accordance with laws and departmental policy.

III. USE OF ALPR SYSTEMS

Prior to utilizing ALPRs members shall be trained in the proper operation and use of the technology.

Each member assigned to operate an ALPR shall ensure that a diagnostic check is performed and that the unit is properly functioning.

It shall be the responsibility of each ALPR operator to ensure the download of the most recent hotlist occurs on the mobile computer prior to deployment of the system.

Use of ALPR systems mounted to patrol vehicles shall be used only for legitimate law enforcement purposes. These purposes include identification of registration plates which are stolen, canceled, revoked, have insurance stops or pickup orders. It also includes plates assigned to Commercial Vehicles that have been placed out of service, or owe delinquent fines or penalties to NCDOT. Members using ALPRs shall not operate an ALPR in areas or in a manner that is designed to harass or intimidate citizens.

The Motor Carrier Enforcement Administration Section Director or his/her designee shall complete an annual report for The Commanders Office detailing the effectiveness of the Automatic License Plate Reader Program. This report should be submitted no later than the 15th day of January for the preceding year.

IV. PROCEDURE WHEN THE ALPR SYSTEM ALERTS ON A VEHICLE

The ALPRs can sometimes misread a plate and does not recognize the state of origin. Additionally, the data against which the plates are compared are not updated in real time. Therefore, when the ALPR alerts on a plate, members shall follow these procedures:

- **MEMBERS SHALL NOT TAKE ANY ENFORCEMENT ACTION BASED SOLELY ON THE ALPR ALERT**
- ALPR alerts must first be confirmed through DCI/NCIC prior to taking any enforcement action
- When the ALPR system alerts on a plate, members shall:
 1. Confirm the characters and state displayed on the vehicle registration was not misread and match the alert.
 2. After confirming the characters and state, members shall run the plate through DCI or other appropriate official database to confirm the reason for the alert.

V. DATA RECORDED BY THE ALPR SYSTEMS

Data obtained and/or stored through use of ALPRs shall not be disseminated outside the Department. However, data obtained and stored through use of ALPRs may be shared with other law enforcement agencies that request access for a legitimate law enforcement purpose upon approval by the Unit Commander of the Technical Services Unit in consultation with the Commander's Office. All LPR-generated data will be purged after a 90 day retention period unless a longer retention period has been identified for court or investigative purposes consistent with the requirements set forth in G. S. 20-183.31. Access to the ALPR database is limited to official law enforcement purposes only.